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SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,
ACADEMY OF SCIENCES LATVIAN SSR

A General Assembly of the Academy of Sciences Latvian SSR was convened in Vil'nyus on 23 - 25 April. Among the delegates attending were active and corresponding members of the academy, scientific associates of the academy's institutes, and representatives of various societies.

Professor Yu. Matulis, President of the academy, gave an address on the academy's activities during 1950. In the address he mentioned that the academy had organized 24 scientific expeditions, and that the results of numerous research projects had been turned over for use by industries of the national economy. Among the more important projects which were brought to a successful conclusion during the past year were: "Schemes for Utilizing Local Power Resources in the Electrification of Agriculture in the Latvian SSR," "Development of Industries in the Field of Construction Materials From Raw Materials Available in the Latvian SSR," and "Studies of the Inundated Meadows Along the Lower Reaches of the Nemunas River."

A considerable amount of research was conducted by the Biology Institute in the region of the Kurshyu-Mares Bay, in the interests of improving fishery conditions in the internal waters of the republic.

The Institute of Agricultural Sciences has completed a number of projects, including the following: "Development of the Production of Concentrated Fodders," "Fodders Composed of Locally Available Materials for Large Horned Cattle and Swine," and "Methods Employed by Leading Farmers and Means for Popularizing Advanced Methods."

There is no letdown in the high tempo on research and studies being maintained by the institutes of the Social Sciences Department.

Another item on the credit side of the ledger is the improved liaison between the academy and various educational institutes, resulting in far more efficient scientific achievements.

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There are, however, certain facets of the operation of the academy which should not and cannot be condoned. One of the major evils is the continuous tendency of the institutes to fall short of their scientific research plans. The Latvian Language Institute was very lax about complying with the established work plan. The Institute of Technical Sciences, the Institute of Experimental Medicine, and others were slow in providing for the proper and rapid introduction of completed research projects into the national economy. Several projects of the Biology Institute could not be accepted by the national economy owing to serious research errors.

Serious shortcomings were encountered in the training program for scientific personnel. Some of the academicians and corresponding members of the academy appeared totally disinterested in the welfare and education of the aspirants who were assigned to them. There was not sufficient interest displayed in the establishment of regular scientific discussions by the scientific councils of the institutes. The Bureaus of the departments and the Presidium were at odds with one another when it came to providing for efficient coordination of the efforts of various expeditions. Finally there appears to be a lack of proper ideological training of the personnel.

The end of Matulis' speech was the signal for wholehearted discussions and statements by various directors and scientists of the academy's institutes.

Professor Belyukas, director of the Institute of Geology and Geography, commented on the various so-called positive factors in the work of his institute, but at the same time admitted that there were some shortcomings in its research work. He noted the breakdown in efficient procedure where the training of new personnel and the industrial application of completed research projects is concerned.

As a supplement to this speech, Tarvidas, chief of the Geography Sector of the above institute, suggested that some improvement should be brought about with respect to closer liaison between personnel of the institute and other geologists and geographers.

Professor Daukshas, director of the Institute of Chemistry and Chemical Technology, stated that associates at his institute had worked on some nine projects, and that all of them were "fundamentally completed." One of these projects involved the determination of the possibility for manufacturing a magnesium bonding agent utilizing locally available raw materials. It was noted that the republic has large reserves of valuable minerals, but the complaint of the institute was that the Ministry of Construction Materials was unwilling to contribute necessary technical aid in the development of new construction materials.

Professor Girdziyauskas, director of the Institute of Experimental Medicine, reported on the methods being employed by the institute to popularize the teachings and achievements of I. P. Pavlov. However, he once again asked the Presidium of the academy to reconsider the immediate delivery of a vivarium for use by the institute in its experiments.

Rimshyalis, chief of the Oncological Sector of the Institute of Experimental Medicine, described the inadequate nature of the aid being rendered to junior scientific associates by some of the active and corresponding members of the academy.

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Valyus, chief of the Biology Institute, dealt for some time on the shortcomings of the work of his institute. He was particularly eloquent in pointing out that many biologists at the academy still do not recognize the fact that Michurinian biology is the only biology which practices close relationship between theory and practice. Valyus, however, assured the delegates attending the meeting that shortcomings of work at his institute were realized and that everyone was working hard to overcome them.

Vazalinskas, director of the Institute of Agricultural Sciences, discussed the aid rendered by associates of the institute to socialistic agriculture and the close liaison which the institute maintains with sov-khozes.

Purenas and Krishchyunas, active members of the academy, and Bronykaytis, deputy director, Institute of Technical Sciences, and others stressed the importance of the significant increase in the number of scientific personnel.

Replies to Professor Matulis' speech were also made by Dalinkyavichyus, Institute of Geology and Geography; Pakarklis, Law Institute; Chepulite, Institute of Geology and Geography; Manyukas, Biology Institute; Indryunas, Institute of Technical Sciences; Shkleryus, Institute of Reclamation; Lashas, academician-secretary, Department of Natural, Mathematical, and Applied Sciences; and Barshishkis, director, Academy Library.

Several reports were also submitted at general meetings of the session as follows: "Great Construction Projects of Communism and Contributions by Scientists of the Latvian Republic" (report by K. Belyukas); "Tasks of Scientists of the Latvian SSR With Respect to Aiding Agriculture" (report by V. Vazalinskas); "A. Matskyavichyus, Leader of the 1863 Farmers' Rebellion" (report by Yu. Zhyugzhda); and "Fish Resources of the Kurshyu-Mares Bay, Based on Data Collected by the Hydrobiological Expedition" (report by Yu. Manyukas).

Sixteen reports were submitted at meetings of the Department of Natural, Mathematical, and Applied Sciences.

Finally, and in accordance with the charter of the academy, there was carried out a re-election of the Presidium. Results were as follows: Prof Yuozas Yuozovich Matulis was re-elected president; Prof Yuozas Ionovich Zhyugzhda was elected vice-president; Prof Kazis Kazevich Belyukas was elected academician-secretary.

Delegates to the General Assembly also confirmed the appointments of the directors of several newly organized institutes.

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